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NEGRO COMPETITION.

An Objection to Unrestricted Reciprocity.

By WATSON GRIFFIN.

It is a noteworthy fact that at the present time many important industries in the Northern States are unable to successfully compete with their newly established Southern rivals which have the advantage of cheap negro labor. This competition of cheap negro labor is likely to bear harder and harder upon the white workmen of the Northern States, whose wages must be reduced to correspondingly low figures. The Northern States have more to fear from the cheap negro labor of the south than from the so-called pauper labor of Europe. Indeed, it was this negro competition which forced the northern capitalists to import cheap labor from Europe, and the workmen of the north in self-defence secured the passage of an act of Congress prohibiting the importation of labor by con-

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tract. During the civil war and for some time afterward very high wages were paid in the United States, but for many years the wages of American workmen have been gradually reduced, and this process of reduction seems likely to continue in all those branches of labor in which the negro can be taught to compete with the white man. Whatever checks the United States Congress may place upon the importation of workmen from Europe they cannot stop the rapid increase of the negro population, nor prevent the gradual lowering of wages which negro competition is bringing about. Eminent American statisticians have estimated that in less than fifty years there will be over forty million negroes in the United States. Fifty years is a long time, but some of the young Canadians who will cast their first votes on the 5th of March will be younger than Sir John Macdonald is to-day, when fifty years have gone, and if they vote for unrestricted reciprocity they may experience the dire effects of negro competition long before they become middle aged men. I do not pretend that the negro is ever likely to come north to take the places of Canadian workmen. The blacks will not come north to the factories, but the factories may go south to the blacks. Those Canadian workmen who are now protesting against the encouragement of pauper immigration will do well to unitedly oppose unrestricted

ed reciprocity which will make them subject to negro competition. And the men in the workshops are not the only ones who would suffer from negro competition under unrestricted reciprocity. Anyone who has travelled through the mining districts of Pennsylvania and Nova Scotia must be impressed with the remarkable superiority in the appearance of the people of the Canadian mining districts. There was not always such a difference. The character of Pennsylvania's mining population has gradually changed, the places of the old miners being taken by rough and ignorant immigrants from the least civilized countries of Europe, who can compete more successfully with the negroes of the south. Not long ago, when some of these foreign miners of Pennsylvania, becoming impregnated with American ideas, presumed to strike for higher wages, their places were filled by negroes imported from the south.

If unrestricted reciprocity is adopted the farmers will find that the big farms of the south, where negro labor is extensively employed, are as near to the great metropolitan cities of the Union, as are those of Canada, and southern farm produce will compete with Canadian produce, not only in the great cities of the United States, but also in the markets of Canada. While the Canadian farmer is preparing his garden for seeding, early vegetables from the south

will be selling at high prices in Canadian markets; the Canadian farmer will sorrowfully watch the fruit slowly ripening in his orchard, while carloads of southern fruit, bound for Canadian cities, will pass swiftly over the railway running through his farm.

Surely Canadians will not surrender to the United States Congress the right of making Canada's tariff for the sake of meeting such competition at home and in the much talked of market of sixty-six million people.

MONTREAL, Feb. 27, 1891.

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